

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 4, 20 and 23 as follows.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the
Application:

Claim 1 (original): 1. A container comprising:

a first and a second end cap having a cross section,

a central portion coupled to the first and the second end caps, and

a merchandising card extending between and secured in position in the end caps.

Claim 2 (original): The container of claim 1, wherein the central portion comprises a transparent material.

Claim 3 (original): The container of claim 2, wherein the transparent material comprises a thermoplastic.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The container of claim 1, wherein the end caps and the central portion are ~~mechanically~~ coupled using an interference fit.

Claim 5 (original): The container of claim 4, further comprising protrusions on the end cap for engaging openings in the central portion.

Claim 6 (original): The container of claim 4, further comprising a protrusion on the central portion for engaging an opening in the end cap.

Claim 7 (previously withdrawn):

Claim 8 (previously withdrawn):

Claim 9 (original): The container of claim 4, wherein each end cap further comprises a groove for accepting the central portion.

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Claim 10 (original): The container of claim 1, wherein the end caps and the central portion are frictionally engaged.

Claim 11 (original): The container of claim 1, wherein the end caps are molded.

Claim 12 (original): The container of claim 1, wherein the central portion comprises a cross section selected from the group consisting of an oval, a circle, an ellipse, a square, and a polygon.

Claim 13 (original): The container of claim 1, wherein the merchandising card comprises a plurality of openings.

Claim 14 (original): The container of claim 1, wherein the end caps are capable of supporting the central portion in an upright position.

Claim 15 (original): The container of claim 1, wherein the merchandising card comprises a first and a second end, each end insertable in an opening formed in the end caps.

Claim 16 (original): The container of claim 1, wherein the merchandising card comprises a first and a second end, the ends positionable between protrusions extending from the end caps.

Claim 17 (original): The container of claim 1, wherein the merchandising card comprises a first end, the first end positionable between protrusions extending from the first end cap.

Claim 18 (original): The container of claim 17, wherein the merchandising card comprises a second end, the second end insertable in an opening formed in the second end cap.

Claim 19 (original): The container of claim 1, wherein the merchandising card carries graphics or indicia.

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Claim 20 (currently amended): A container for displaying ~~items~~ an item, comprising:
a merchandising card for securing an item to be displayed;

a first and a second end cap, each end cap comprising a depression shaped to secure the
~~item to be displayed~~ merchandising card; and

a central portion coupled to the first and the second end caps.

Claim 21 (original): The container of claim 20, wherein the central portion comprises a transparent material.

Claim 22 (original): The container of claim 21, wherein the transparent material comprises a thermoplastic.

Claim 23 (currently amended): The container of claim 20, wherein the end caps and the central portion are ~~mechanically~~ coupled using an interference fit.

Claim 24 (original): The container of claim 23, further comprising protrusions on the end cap for engaging openings in the central portion.

Claim 25 (original): The container of claim 23, further comprising a protrusion on the central portion for engaging an opening in the end cap.

Claim 26 (previously withdrawn):

Claim 27 (previously withdrawn):

Claim 28 (original): The container of claim 23, wherein each end cap further comprises a groove for accepting the central portion.

Claim 29 (original): The container of claim 20, wherein the end caps and the central portion are frictionally engaged.

Claim 30 (original): The container of claim 20, wherein the end caps are molded.

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Claim 31 (original): The container of claim 20, wherein the central portion comprises a cross section selected from the group consisting of an oval, a circle, an ellipse, a square, and a polygon.

Claim 32 (original): The container of claim 20, wherein the end caps are capable of supporting the central portion in an upright position.

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